

Lent March 23, 2025

FIRST CHURCH

Congregational 1633-1636 United Church of Christ Garden and Mason Streets Cambridge, Massachusetts

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...

Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

We're glad you are worshiping with us today! First Church is a vibrant, multi-generational, engaged, urban church. We care a lot about each other and what's happening in the world around us. Wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome here.

March 23, 2025

Offering Reflections
Leading WorshipJean Dany Joachim, David McCann, and Luke Salisbury
Audrey Bellinger, Lisa DiNardo, Will Erickson, Casey Marsh,
Beth Spaulding, and Linda Ziebell, Deacons
Justin Brueggeman, guest musician
Emma Mitchell, Pastoral Associate
Lee Prouty, Facilities ManagerBulletin Cover Imagephotography by Audrey Bellinger

Today's Programs and Events

9:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:00 a.m.	Lenten Formation: Connecting with Truth Tellers,
	Harter Room & <u>via Zoom</u>
11:00 a.m.	Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:20 a.m.	Church School: Godly Play & Bible 101 classes, Library & The Well
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
12:30 p.m.	Family Choir Rehearsal, Chapel
12:30 p.m.	Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders, The Well
7:00 p.m.	Faith & Life Group: Exploring Our Faith as Adults Through
	the Confirmation Curriculum II, Harter Room
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and <u>via livestream</u>

New to First Church?

Have you just begun joining us for worship? Consider filling out a visitor card found on the small clipboards or this "virtual visitor card" so that we might connect with you about our community.

Give to First Church

You can give electronically by using the QR code in the bulletin or explore more options for giving at: <u>www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give</u>

Contact a Pastor or Staff Member

Find <u>contact information</u> for our ministerial, program, and building staff on our website. For general information and inquiries: info@firstchurchcambridge.org

> Have a church program or event to promote? Complete the <u>First Church Communications Request</u> form.

> > Have an edit or update for our website? Complete the <u>FCC Website Changes</u> form

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE congregational **389YEARS** ON THE WAY 1636-2025

GATHERING

"Keep fighting for freedom and justice, beloveds, but don't forget to have fun doin' it. Lord, let your laughter ring forth. Be outrageous, ridicule the fraidy-cats, rejoice in all the oddities that freedom can produce."

> - Molly Ivins, truth teller featured in the Americans Who Tell the Truth project

VOLUNTARY	There Is a Happy Land	George Shearing
*HYMN 244	Like a Tree Beside the Waters	
*CALL TO WC	ORSHIP AND WORDS OF WELCOME	Audrey Bellinger
L:	Sisters, brothers, siblings, come, you who thirst for wellsprings in the wilderness,	
С	Come, you who long for healing and wholeness!	
L:	Beloved, come, you who yearn for a deeper life and a fairer wo	orld.
C:	Come and find this courage through the Spirit's call	
L:	to the truth that sets us free, to love deep as an aquifer and wide as the sea!	
C:	Come now, draw near to God with thanks and praise!	

CONFESSING

ANTHEM

Kyrie

Michael Praetorius

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Will Erickson

SILENCE

SUNG PRAYER OF CONFESSION

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

- L: The peace of Christ be with you!
- C: And also with you!



*You are invited to stand. Hymns proceeded by a "C" are found in the beginning section of the hymnal. This section contains hymns written and composed by current and past members of First Church in Cambridge.

A MUTUAL BLESSING

Casey Marsh

Linda Ziebell

Adults:God be with you there.Children:And God be with you here.

Children up through 6th grade are now invited to Church School classes. Godly Play (PreK-4th grade) and Bible 101 (5/6th grade) students can meet their teachers at the side door by the Children's Book Corner. Caregivers can find the children in the Chapel after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

All: God of living water, you meet us in unexpected places and surprise us with the abundance of your love. Feed us by your word, offered in Scripture and poetry. Fill us with your Spirit, so that we may follow you this day and always. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

READING

Isaiah 55:1-9

REFLECTIONS

Jean Dany Joachim, Luke Salisbury, and David McCann

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from the United Church of Canada

All: We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

> We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Emma Mitchell

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

- L: God be with you.
- C: And also with you.
- L: Let us pray... (silence, intercessions, and the Lord's Prayer)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Please pray this prayer in words most meaningful to your heart.

All: Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Beth Spaulding

Our offering supports the many ministries of our church, with 10% for missions in the community and beyond. Please use our new <u>all-in-one link</u> for gifts from your bank account or by credit/debit card:



OFFERTORY

Called from the World

Kate Layzer/Peter Sykes

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to God and to the Lamb, I will sing; To God and to the Lamb, who is the great I Am, while millions join the theme, I will sing.

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 237

How Firm a Foundation

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in C

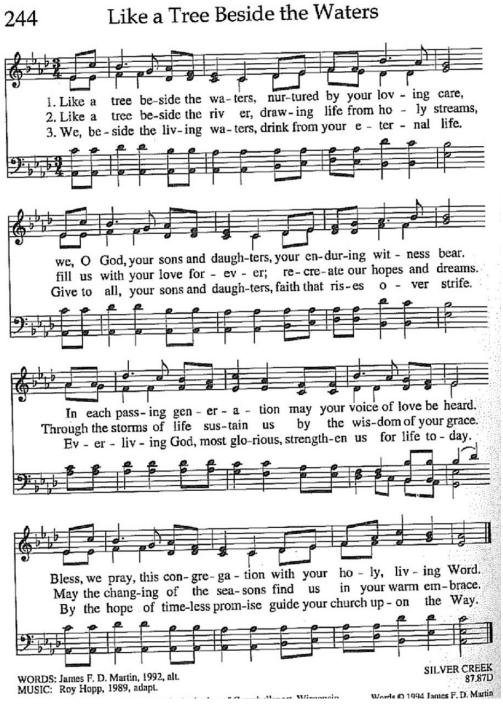
J. S. Bach



First Church Land Acknowledgment

We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment <u>here</u> or with the QR code.



⁻Hymn Insert 1-

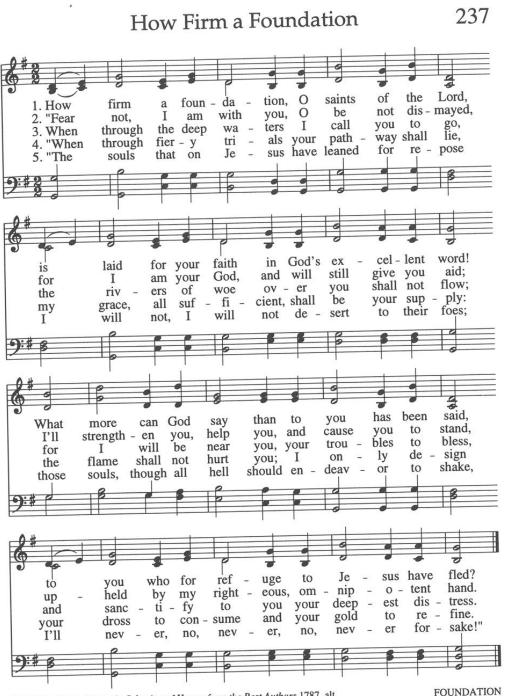
PEACE HYMN

417 All My Hope on God Is Founded



-Hymn Insert 2-

CLOSING HYMN



WORDS: "K" in Rippon's Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors, 1787, alt. MUSIC: Early American melody from Funk's Genuine Church Music, 1832

FOUNDATION 11 11.11 11

-Hymn Insert 3-

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Cathy Patton and her housemates as they mourn the death of Maxwell Liner, a staff member at Cathy's group home.
- We pray for all who are living with significant health challenges and their families and caregivers: Ellen Frith, who is living with a serious chronic illness; Poppy Coffin, who is experiencing Alzheimer's Disease; Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder; and Keith Manville, who has atypical Parkinsonism. We also pray for those in treatment for cancer: Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan's mother; Ellen Smith, Devin Hansen's aunt; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones's mother; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet and her son-in-law Stewart Bailey; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray for the families who lost loved ones in the catastrophic storms that passed through a large section of our country last weekend. We continue to pray for our earth and for all creation in the face of the climate crisis.
- We pray for those who have been deported by our government without due process, and for their loved ones who are anxiously awaiting news of their circumstances. We pray especially for the immigrant community in Chelsea, where ICE has increased their presence in the past week. We pray for the future of our democracy, as we witness alarming abuses of power.
- We pray for our nation. Most of all we pray that we, as Church, will see and embody the way of Jesus Christ in this time and place, even, if need be, at cost to ourselves. We pray for all whose lives are being upended by the policies of the current administration, both domestically and internationally, especially those whose wellbeing is again being sacrificed for the political power of the few.
- We continue to pray for peace in Eastern Congo, where millions are displaced due to the fighting between the Rwandan-backed M23 militia and the Congolese army. We pray that the children and staff of the Congo Peace School will be safe, and that God's presence may be with them and all the loved ones of Amani and Amini Matabaro Tom.
- We pray for Gaza, especially as the ceasefire was shattered earlier this week by an Israeli attack that killed over 400 Palestinians. We pray for all who are grieving, as we continue to bear witness to the terrible impact of ongoing war, in Gaza and in other regions of the world trapped in cycles of violence.
- We pray for the 14 men finding sustenance and protection in our First Church Shelter; and we pray for the guests of the Friday Café, who are finding resources and listening ears.

Join the <u>First Church List</u> to see and offer up more community prayer requests.



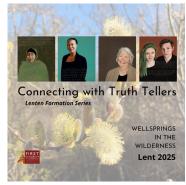
In Memoriam

A memorial service for beloved long-time member Perry Neubauer will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a reception to follow.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Lenten Formation Series: Connecting with Truth Tellers Today and Sunday, March 30, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m. Harter Room and <u>via Zoom</u>

The Christian Formation Committee invites you, once again, to engage with portraits of truth tellers as we walk together through the season of Lent. Join us for any or all of the four sessions dedicated to grounding ourselves in the stories of activists for immigrant justice, environmental sustainability, and trans rights, as well as a journalist who spoke truth to power with a generous dose of humor. In this "wilderness" time for our nation, come connect



with these wellsprings as we seek spiritual sustenance and inspiration for our own action.



Family Choir Rehearsal Today, March 30, and April 6, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m., Chapel Anyone and everyone at First Church is invited to sing wit

Anyone and everyone at First Church is invited to sing with the Family Choir in Palm Sunday worship on April 13. People of all ages and all experience levels are welcome to learn a compelling song of walking together. Join Sarah Higginbotham for **three short rehearsals in the Chapel after worship,** then plan to arrive early on Palm Sunday to prepare our musical offering for worship.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders Today, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., The Well

7th and 8th graders from First Church and Old South Church meet for a session of their year-long sexuality education curriculum.





Wade in the Water Featured in Quilts250: Stitching in the Spirit of Democracy Today, 10:00 - 4:00 p.m., Concord Academy Gymnasium, 132 Main St., Concord First Church's fabric artwork that remembers and honors First Church members who were enslaved by other members of our congregation will be part of Quilts250, an exhibit for the 250th commemoration of the Battles of Lexington and Concord that mark the birth of our nation's democracy. Admission is free; learn more.

Night Song

Today, 7:30 - 8:15 p.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

Night Song is a worship opportunity that offers stillness and sublime music in a darkened sanctuary for respite and reset. *Learn more about Night Song.*



LENT AT FIRST CHURCH



Lent 2025: Wellsprings in the Wilderness

Each year the season of Lent begins with the story of Jesus spending 40 days in the wilderness, being tempted by "the Slanderer" (a.k.a. Satan) as Jesus begins his public teaching. "The wilderness" seems like a particularly poignant image for many of us these days, both in personal and public life. During this Lenten season, we are reflecting on our experiences of wilderness and take hope that, even in the wilderness, there are wellsprings that sustain us. Because

truth and truth tellers are one of those wellsprings, we'll be blessed again by engaging with four powerful portraits from the <u>Americans Who Tell the Truth</u> project. Come, and drink from wellsprings in the wilderness.

Organ Music in Lent

The organ music played during this year's season of Lent is taken from "The Art of Fugue" by Johann Sebastian Bach. This monumental exploration of musical discipline contains some of the most sophisticated contrapuntal music ever written and was left unfinished at Bach's death. If you'd like to know more, ask Music Director Peter Sykes after any service; he will be happy to elaborate!



40-Day Target Fast

Beginning March 5 - Concluding April 17, 2025



Join Black Churches in Boycotting Target During Lent

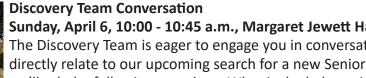
Rev. Jamal Bryant of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Stonecrest, Georgia, is recruiting "100,000 conscientious Christians," to join a Lenten fast from Target, a retail chain store that recently announced it would pull back from its diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, including one dedicated to diversifying the suppliers it uses to stock its shelves. Black churches and denominations, such as Washington's Metropolitan AME Church, which hosted 40 First Church pilgrims in 2019, are urging white churches to join the ef-

fort. The Missions & Social Justice Committee and the Beloved Community group hope that 100 people at First Church in Cambridge will join this Lenten fast by signing your name to a poster that will be available again during today's Coffee Hour, or by emailing our Racial Justice group at: belovedcommunity@firstchurchcambridge.org to have your name included.

Read more, including information on shopping at local, Black-owned businesses.

COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH

Young Adults: Bowling Friday, March 28, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., American Flatbread (Sacco's), Davis Square Come join our active young adults group (20s and 30s) for a fun night of bowling and casual fellowship. It's a great way to meet new friends and to ask questions about faith, life, and First Church. This group gathers a few times a month on a rotating basis. Please RSVP so we know to expect you: youngadults@ firstchurchcambridge.org



Sunday, April 6, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Margaret Jewett Hall The Discovery Team is eager to engage you in conversation on topics that directly relate to our upcoming search for a new Senior Minister. This month we'll ask the following questions: What is the balance in the Church between

being outward facing (social justice, for example) and inward facing (deepening our relationship with each other and God)? How do you feel about the current balance? How would you like it to shift, if at all?

GBIO Organizing Trainings in April

10

"Organizing Power: Foundation for Justice" is a training for leaders who want to organize their congregations, organizations, and communities to make change in a time of great uncertainty and increasing isolation.



WL-HAV ATBREAD

BOWLIN

Trainers will provide a framework for power and tools to build it that leaders can use to organize institutionally, locally, and beyond for this moment and for generations to come. If we are serious about justice, we need power. And if we want power, we need to make time to organize. (You only need to register for ONE session, and yes, there will be food.) If you'd like to coordinate your signup with other FCC folks, email Will with your preferred date (wericks2002@ gmail.com). Scan QR Codes to Register:



Additional workshops for May and June to be announced

HOLY WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH



Easter Flower Donations

If you wish to donate memorial flowers for loved ones this Easter, please send the names of those to be remembered to Bruce Dillenbeck (bruce@ firstchurchcambridge.org) in the First Church office by Friday, April 11. Contributions of \$20 to help defray the cost of flowers can be made <u>online</u> or by check in the offering basket (payable to First Church in Cambridge, with a memo line of "Easter Flowers"). *Please send an email to Bruce with*

the names, even if you pay by check through the offering basket or online; this way we can make sure no one is missed. On Easter Sunday, the congregation is invited to take a plant to a homebound parishioner to spread the joy of Easter.

Palm Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, April 13, 10:00 - 10:50 a.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us as we participate in one of the most ancient, common, and sustaining of Christian practices—sharing a meal together, in an atmosphere where strangers are guests, guests are friends, and friends are family. This meal will be a partial potluck: Fellowship will provide hot cross buns, granola, yogurt, and coffee, and the congregation is invited to contribute fruit, juice, or a breakfast side such as quiche or sausage. Breakfast at 10:00 a.m. in Margaret Jewett Hall will nourish us in body and spirit for our 10:55 a.m. Palm Sunday procession into the Sanctuary. Signup sheet for volunteers to follow, stay tuned!





HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday Service Sunday, April 13

Palm Procession at 10:55 a.m., church lawn Morning Worship at 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

> Maundy Thursday Service Thursday, April 17, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

Good Friday Service Friday, April 18, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Chapel and via livestream

Easter Worship Sunday, April 20 at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

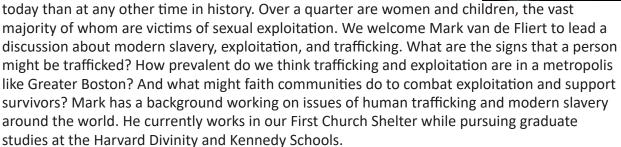
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LOOKING AHEAD

Understanding Human Trafficking Today

Sunday, April 27, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

While the Emancipation Proclamation ended the legality of slavery in the United States, it did not end its practice – either domestically or abroad. By many accounts, there are more people facing enslaved conditions





Tuesday Family Night Reunion

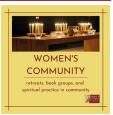
Tuesday, April 29, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Sage Hall For many years in the 2010's, First Church families with young children would gather every other Tuesday evening in Sage Hall for a simple pasta potluck dinner. Parents would linger over dinner as kids raced around our basement playspace on tricycles or built towers with blocks. Deeper reflection and connection amongst parents

would take place during seasonal small group offerings during this time, including Bible study and book group discussion. We are now at a point when a new generation of families with young children might be ready to consider choosing this type of community connection. To kick start the conversation, ALL families from the "old" Family Night are invited to join ANY "new" families with young ones for a chance to look back and look forward toward a possible renewal of this family ministry. Sarah will provide the pasta and sauce (on the side!); please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Most importantly, bring your kids, no matter how young or old - the trikes are still here waiting for them!

First Church Women's Retreat

Saturday, May 3, 9:00 - 12:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

All who identify as women in the First Church community are invited to save the date of Saturday, May 3, for our annual Women's Retreat. This year, the focus will be on themes found in Robin Wall Kimmerer's new gem of a book <u>The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World.</u> Contact



Alex (alex@steinert-evoy.com) or Sue (susanreynolds235@gmail.com) to learn more and borrow a book.



Monday, March 24

4:30 p.m.	Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom	
C.00 mm	Faith & Life Crown, Care Crown for Caregivers win	-

6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Care Group for Caregivers, via Zoom

Tuesday, March 25

Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting, via Zoom 3:00 p.m. Executive Council, via Zoom 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 26

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

Friday, March 28

Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH) 12:00 p.m. Young Adults: Bowling at Flatbread/Sacco's, Davis Square 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 30 - Fourth Sunday in Lent

- 9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- Lenten Formation: Connecting with Truth Tellers, Harter Room & via Zoom 10:00 a.m.
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
- Church School: Creative Arts Workshop, MJH 11:20 a.m.
- 12:15 p.m. **Refreshments in Hastings Common**
- Family Choir Rehearsal, Chapel 12:30 p.m.
- 12:30 p.m. Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders. The Well
- Faith & Life Group: Exploring Our Faith as Adults 7:00 p.m. Through the Confirmation Curriculum II, via Zoom
- Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream 7:30 p.m.

Have a church program or event to promote? Complete the First Church Communications Request form. SCAN

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First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC 11 Garden St. • Cambridge, MA 02138

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Sign up here to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

See our Events Calendar for Zoom links and details.